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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawing includes a new Fig. 3.

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REMARKS

In regard to section 2 of the office action, a new Fig. 3 has been added. No new matter has been added. Support for the new figure and the added language to the specification can be found, among other places, at page 9, lines 26-30 and page 7, lines 22-28.

In regard to section 3 of the office action, item (A) has been corrected above. Items (B) and (C) have not been changed. Claim 21 is an independent claim. Thus, it does not need to recited "mask tape" just because other claims use that term.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-11 and 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated Hoppe et al. (US 5,637,858). Claims 2 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoppe et al. (US 5,637,858) in view of Atsumi (US 5,736,781). Claims 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoppe et al. (US 5,637,858) in view of Leydier (US 6,217,685). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

Independent claims 1 and 5 have been amended to state that the second face is an opposite face. Entry of the amendment should not require further search or consideration because independent claims 16 and 21 also use the word "opposite". Claim 1 has also been amended to insure that the mask is being treated as a positive element.

In regard to claim 1, in Hoppe et al. the face of contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach is not an opposite face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive

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22. The face of the contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach and the face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive 22 face the same direction. Claim 1, on the other hand, claims that the tape has a substrate. The substrate has a contact area on a first face, and an opposite second face being capable of supporting an integrated circuit and being provided with cutouts exhibiting contact pad areas and adhesive.

Claim 1 also claims that the tape has a mask. The mask comprises a cutout forming a window adapted to subsequently receive the integrated circuit. The examiner points to opening "26" of Fig. 3 in Hoppe et al. as being the same as applicant's claimed cutout. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion that opening 26 in Fig. 3 forms a window adapted to subsequently receive the integrated circuit. Column 4, lines 1-29 merely describe the opening 26 as receiving casting compound 21; not the integrated circuit 17. Figs. 7a and 7b are discussed with integrated circuit 17 being received within openings 26, but this is a different embodiment and does not disclose all of the other features of claim 1. Furthermore, the opening 26 of the mask 25 in Fig. 3 is incapable of being adapted to "subsequently" receive the integrated circuit 17 after the mask (25) is attached to the substrate (11, 5) because Fig. 3 shows the integrated circuit 17 encased with casting compound 21 on the substrate (11, 5) and the casting compound 21 attached by adhesive 22 to the mask (25). Clearly, integrated circuit 17 is attached to the substrate (11, 5) before the mask 25 is attached to the substrate (11, 5) and the casting compound 21. With applicant's invention as

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claimed in claim 1, on the other hand, the tape is provided with the mask already attached to the substrate and adapted to subsequently have the integrated circuit attached to the tape. The subject matter of claim 1 generally relates to a semi-finished module tape without an IC chip mounted to it. In other words, this is the tape supplied to a module manufacturer (such as an IC card manufacturer) who subsequently attached the IC chip to the tape. The IC card manufacturer only have to mount an IC chip onto the tape, and then cut or stamp the tape to form individual IC modules. The individual IC modules can be subsequently incorporated into an IC card in a final step of the manufacturing process. In contrast, Hoppe et al. discloses in Fig. 7a production of an IC module tape with IC chips already mounted therein.

Applicant's invention has an advantage over Hoppe et al. in that, if there is a mistake in attaching the mask to the substrate (such as misalignment), because the integrated circuit has not been attached to the tape yet, the faulty portion of the tape can be thrown away with much less lost cost than if the integrated chip was already attached to the substrate; such as what would happen with the use of Hoppe et al. In other words, an error in attaching the mask to the substrate in Hoppe et al. is much more costly for the manufacturer than an error in attaching the mask to the substrate with applicant's invention; because the integrated circuit in applicant's invention has not been attached yet.

Hoppe et al. does not disclose or suggest a tape adapted to receive an IC chip as claimed in amended claim 1. Thus, Hoppe et al. does not "anticipate" the features of claim 1. Nor are

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the features of claim 1 suggested by Hoppe et al. and the other art of record. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable and should be allowed.

Though the claims dependent upon claim 1 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

Similar to claim 1, claim 5 has been amended to note that the second face is an opposite second face on the substrate. As noted above, in Hoppe et al. the face of contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach is not an opposite face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive 22. The face of the contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach and the face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive 22 face the same direction. Claim 5, on the other hand, claims creating a contact area on a first face of a substrate tape, and arranging a first adhesive means between a second opposite face of the substrate tape and a first face of a mask tape. Hoppe et al. does not disclose or suggest this. Therefore, claim 5 is patentable and should be allowed.

Though the claims dependent upon claim 5 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 5. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

Independent claim 16 has not been amended. Claim 16 claims a tape comprising a substrate tape having a first face and an

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opposite second face. Contact areas are on the first face and a mask tape is attached to the second face. As noted above, in Hoppe et al. the face of contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach is not an opposite face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive 22. The face of the contact surface 5 where the connecting elements 19 attach and the face of the substrate (11, 5) which has the adhesive 22 face the same direction. Claim 16, on the other hand, claims a substrate tape, contact areas on the first face of the substrate and a mask tape attached to the second opposite face of the substrate.

Claim 16 also claims that the mask tape comprises cutouts forming windows adapted to subsequently receive the integrated circuits when the integrated circuits are attached to the second face of the substrate tape. As noted above, this is not disclosed or suggested in Hoppe et al. The examiner points to opening "26" of Fig. 3 in Hoppe et al. as being the same as applicant's claimed cutout. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion that opening 26 in Fig. 3 forms a window adapted to subsequently receive the integrated circuit. Column 4, lines 1-29 merely describe the opening 26 as receiving casting compound 21; not the integrated circuit 17. Figs. 7a and 7b are discussed with integrated circuit 17 being received within openings 26, but this is a different embodiment and does not disclose all of the other features of claim 1. Furthermore, the opening 26 of the mask 25 in Fig. 3 is incapable of being adapted to "subsequently" receive the integrated circuit 17 after the mask (25) is attached to the substrate (11, 5) because Fig. 3 shows the integrated circuit

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17 encased with casting compound 21 on the substrate (11, 5) and the casting compound 21 attached by adhesive 22 to the mask (25). Clearly, integrated circuit 17 is attached to the substrate (11, 5) before the mask 25 is attached to the substrate (11, 5) and the casting compound 21.

With applicant's invention as claimed in claim 16, on the other hand, the tape is provided with the mask already attached to the substrate and adapted to subsequently have the integrated circuit attached to the tape. The subject matter of claim 16 generally relates to a semi-finished module tape without an IC chip mounted to it. In other words, this is the tape supplied to a module manufacturer (such as an IC card manufacturer) who subsequently attached the IC chip to the tape. The IC card manufacturer only have to mount an IC chip onto the tape, and then cut or stamp the tape to form individual IC modules. The individual IC modules can be subsequently incorporated into an IC card in a final step of the manufacturing process. In contrast, Hoppe et al. discloses in Fig. 7a production of an IC module tape with IC chips already mounted therein. The features of claim 16 are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. Therefore, claim 16 is patent able and should be allowed.

Though the claims dependent upon claim 16 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 16. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

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For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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5/21/07  
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